

OVERVIEW OF WELFARE REFORM AND REAUTHORIZATION

The 1996 Republican welfare reforms have worked.

- Child poverty fell sharply. Since 1996, nearly 3 million children have been lifted from poverty; the black child poverty rate is now at a record low. *(Census Bureau)*
- More parents are working. Employment by mothers most likely to go on welfare rose by 40% between 1995 and 2000. *(Census Bureau)*
- Dependence fell by unprecedented levels. Welfare caseloads fell by 9 million -- from 14 million recipients in 1994 to just 5 million today. *(HHS)*

Still, there is more work left to do.

- 58 percent of recipients are not working or training. *(HHS)*
- Too many families break up or never form.
- 2 million families remain dependent on welfare. *(HHS)*

The 2003 Republican bill maintains and strengthens the 1996 reforms.

- More parents are expected to work for their benefits.
- States will continue to receive record federal welfare and child care funds, despite huge caseload declines since 1996.
- New marriage promotion funds will strengthen families.
- “State flex” and other provisions will help better coordinate programs to help more needy families support themselves.